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DALLAS, TEXAS
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FEDERAL JURY CONVICTS MAN ON COUNTERFEITING CHARGES

***Defendant Put More Than \$300,000
in Counterfeit Notes in Circulation in DFW Area***

United States Attorney Richard B. Roper announced that a federal jury in Dallas on Friday found Dallas resident, Emmanuel Osei Hyeaman, guilty on both counts of an indictment that charged him with conspiracy to utter counterfeit obligations and uttering counterfeit obligations. Hyeaman, age 23, who is scheduled to be sentenced on November 29, 2004, by United States District Judge David C. Godbey, faces a maximum statutory sentence of 25 years imprisonment and a \$500,000 fine.

The government presented evidence that Hyeaman was part of a conspiracy that bleached or washed genuine one dollar Federal Reserve Notes or West African currency and then reprinted them as counterfeit \$100 bills. In most instances the West African currency was bleached and reprinted in Nigeria and then secreted into the United States through London. At least one package was intercepted by British Customs agents.

Hyeaman generally presented the counterfeit \$100 bills at convenience stores to purchase money orders, although the counterfeit notes were also passed at local businesses. Approximately \$300,000 in counterfeit currency, forensically connected to Hyeaman, was found to be in circulation in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

The government called as one of its key witnesses a soldier who is presently stationed in Iraq. That witness testified that he knew of Hyeaman's scheme and in fact, Hyeaman had given him counterfeit notes to pass, although the witness never did pass any of the counterfeit notes.

The defendant testified on his own behalf during trial. Another witness for the defense, a clerk at one of the stores where Hyeaman attempted to pass a counterfeit note, was called because she had been unable to identify Hyeaman in a photo lineup presented to her on the day he attempted to pass the note. However, on cross-examination by the government, she identified the defendant in open court for the first time as the same person who attempted to pass counterfeit money in her store.

During trial one juror was dismissed because the Court found that there was improper contact with the defendant's girlfriend. The juror initially lied when confronted by Judge Godbey about the misconduct, but her allegations were refuted when courthouse security video was consulted.

United States Attorney Roper praised the exemplary investigative efforts of the United States Secret Service and the U.S. Marshals Service Court Security. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Aaron Wiley and Sarah Saldana.